

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 10, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC, 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We understand that the Department of Defense is proposing the termination of the C-130J multiyear procurement contract beginning in FY2006. We strongly believe that this cut is ill advised and untimely given the operational shortfalls facing our military and the threats facing our nation. Additionally, the canceling of a multiyear contract to save \$26M in FY2006 is unprecedented.

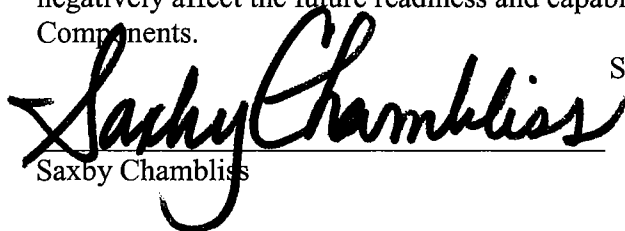
The C-130 aircraft has been the workhorse of the military's tactical airlift fleet for more than 50 years. Currently, more than half the fleet of combat delivery C-130s is 30 years old or older. Although their longevity is clearly a testament to the value of these critical aircraft, we are very concerned that the C-130 E and H model aircraft continue to age at an alarming rate, putting our tactical airlift capability at risk in the near term. Today, both U.S. and Allied C-130Js are performing operational missions in CENTCOM in support of the warfighter, as well as important operations in support of the Tsunami relief effort in Southern Asia.

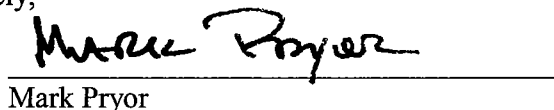
The Defense Department proposed the C-130J multi-year procurement program in 2003 for the Air Force and Marine Corps to mitigate risk associated with the aging C-130 fleet and to lower the procurement cost by 10.5%. The C-130J Bed-down Roadmap is now in jeopardy as the Air Force and Marine Corps will not have sufficient aircraft to complete the modernization of several flying units. The Air Force will be 116 aircraft short of requirement and the Marine Corps will be short 18 aircraft.

This proposed termination will also leave California, Mississippi, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania Guard and Reserve units only partially modernized. Perceived savings generated by these proposed cuts will be consumed by over \$800 Million in termination liability costs and billions of dollars in increased costs to support aging and less capable aircraft. Consequently, this proposal to end the C-130J program could end up costing the American taxpayer more than the cost of completing the multiyear contract for all 62 aircraft, and leave our military with far less capable tactical airlift. Furthermore, no studies and analysis of the total effect of terminating this program were conducted prior to the cancellation decision.

We believe that any decision to terminate this established and successful C-130J multiyear contract should only be considered after both the Mobility Capabilities Study and the Quadrennial Defense Review are completed later this year. We urge you to re-consider these ill-advised cuts that will negatively affect the future readiness and capability of our Air Force, Marine Corps, and Air Reserve Components.

Sincerely,


Saxby Chambliss


Mark Pryor

Frank Lott

Em Bayh

Mike Davis

Ray Bailey Hutchison

Jack Reed

John Cornyn

Mike Legar

C. D. Chafee

Phil Martinez

Dick Durbin

Bill Nelson

Jay Byrnes

Kirk Sutorius

Blanche L. Lincoln

Arlen Specter

Jay Byrnes

Robert C. Byrd

Jeff Sessions

James M. Clack

Jim DeMint

Jeff Sessions

Jim Cooper